

Project Proposal



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Lens -Based Media 2020/2021
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16. November 2020

What I will make

In my project I would like to research the flabread "Roti", which has a long journey and history behind it. I'm interested specifically in the kinds available in the Netherlands that came with the immigrants from Suriname but is originally from India.

In my opinion, the fladbread has become part of the Dutch culture. The roti is made up of only few ingredients, but these are essential because there are many types of the fladbread and it takes great skill and the „know-how“ to prepare. I would like to learn how to prepare the original roti and what the differences between it and the other variations in the Netherlands are and why such variations were created.

I am interested in how we (society) define and perceive objects that have such a complex and long background and have „traveled" and their connection to Dutch colonial history.

The roti represents the journey communities have taken over the years. I think this metaphor can be extended even further. My approach to this project will be a collaboration with members from the Suriname community. I will go into more information further down.

How I will present my research is at this stage is quite open. One Idea is that I would like to be able to produce a Photobook with the material I will collect. I'm interested in showing emotions, ideas and concepts that arise and challenge me during my research. I want to create an emotional rhythm and work with the tension between image, text, design and the medium Photobook.

On the other side I also would like to present the material I will collect in a exhibition context, in collaboration with the people I will collaborate with hopefully. This is also open at this stage. For example if it will possible to have a long-term collaboration with the Mukesh Family (see below), I would like to do a exhibition in there Restaurant if they also would like it.



Roti Restaurant



Roti dish



Inspiration for a Photobook Nikolai Marcinowski



Inspiration for a exhibition

How I will make it

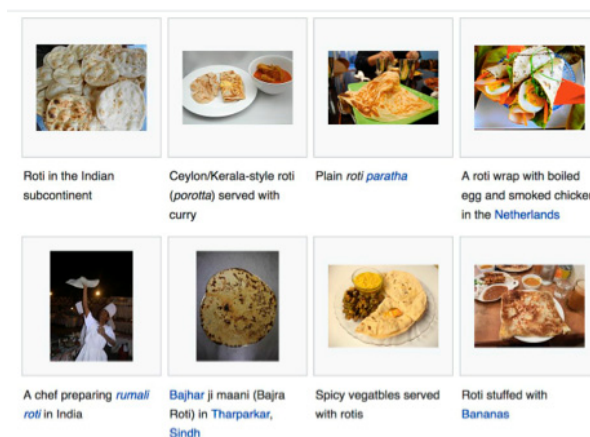
Until now I have been reading and learning about the origin of the dish. The rotis are originally from India and are made up of only a few ingredients, but these are essential because there are many types of the flatbread and it takes great skill to prepare it. This included a detailed historical part, dealing with the colonization of the country Suriname. Thereupon I also dealt with photo archives for example from the Tropa Museum and from the Gemeente Rotterdam for the first time and learned a bit to understand and use them.

Besides my research I asked in Surinamese restaurants if I could do an interview with the staff. Since then I am in contact with the Mukesh family who run a restaurant called Pretoria. The restaurant is near Maashaven and they make and sell Surinamese Hindustani specialties.

After my first meeting with the Mukesh family, I was fascinated by their life story. Afterwards I tried to work out a structure for my project and thought about how I could implement it. I had a similar experience with the photo archives. I became more concrete and tried to find out when and where the first Roti restaurant in the Netherlands opened and wanted to find out the names of the dishes offered there. I took a group photo in the Pretoria restaurant of the family, because the whole family works in this restaurant, mother, father and the sons. I found the atmosphere there very familiar. It felt like a big living room. The people, it seemed to me, knew each other and are regular guests there. Many were curious and asked what was happening there. Unfortunately, I could not answer that at all, because I do not (yet) speak Dutch. But I had a translator with me.

I would like to do more interviews and at a possible second meeting I would like to take pictures of my interview partners according to the social engaged photography principle.

I have arranged another appointment at the Roti store, where I will learn to do Roti and where I can take pictures.



Roti versions



Roti dough



Skyway Euromotel on the Vliegvelddweg, temporary accommodation for emigrated Surinamese because of independence from Suriname. (Archive Images from the Tropa Museum)



Mukesh family

Why I want to make it

I'm very interested to work with the term Social Engaged Photography. I have heard during a talk from Fred Richin about the word to use by getting photographs: `not taking` photos but collaboration for a photo (together).

As I'm part of the post colonial society in which we all live, I found it really important to know about the past and to be aware of the influences that still affect us. My goal is also, to find out how people feel nowadays in the Netherlands who have roots from Suriname.

Another reason for my motivation is certainly that in my life I often felt like an outsider in the society. I think that the emotions and experiences I have had in these times have a strong influence on my way of working and my choice of topics. I have a great interest in finding out how societies work and how they are made up, also from an anthropological point of view.

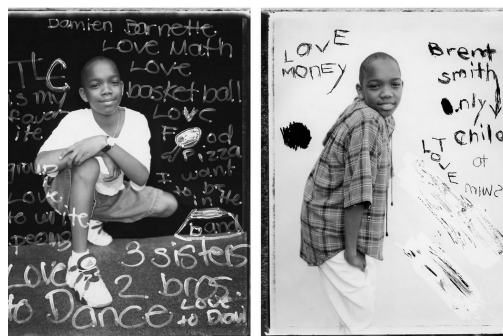
I hope that the images I will produce will be able to communicate something that I have learned through this process. Feeling at home in two different countries, which is a result of political decisions, can have a very big influence on each individual, which each person deals with differently. Maybe my project can show new insights into this.

Relation to previous projects

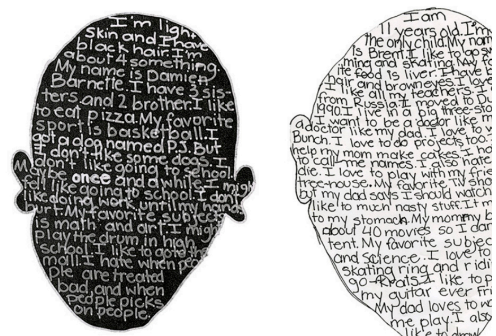
I'm trying to work in a socially engaged photographic tradition. Before that I always tried to work not in a classical way (I describe it more detailed in my outline thesis „Background“).

Relation to a wider context

Social Engaged Practise, recognising unbinary relation of photographer and subject
Interest in how society works, what are the results of political decision in a society?



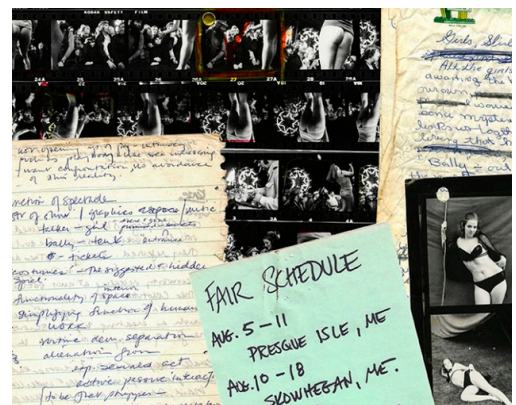
Wendy Ewald Black Self/ Whit Self



Wendy Ewald Black Self/ Whit Self



Laura Elt Tantawy In the Shadow of the Pyramids



Susan Meisela Singular Journey through photography

Timetable/ Practical planning

(Due to Corona pandemic and also in the depend of the people who have time, I can not say exactly if my timetable is possible. Through out this making process I will be informed by my writing and reading process and that my thesis will happen in parallel with this. Furthermore to have a reflection of the last week at the beginning of the following week with Manuella Braunmüller.)

November

- continue Interviews with Amilcar, Orphe
- meet the second time with Donna and collaborate for a picture
- transcribed Interviews
- learn how to do roti with Asha at the Pretoria Restaurant + edit the photos
- analyze all ingredients from the different version in the Netherlands and document it (testing)

Dezember

- continue Interviews with Marciano and Dervin
- continue transcribed Interviews
- try out roti myself and document it + analyse it
- summary of my research -> Mind map on a white board

Januar

- summary of my research -> Mind map on a white board -> summary
- analyze all ingredients from the different version in the Netherlands and document it
- clarification for a longer collaboration with a organization/institute/group/family or person.
- work with the participations in a collaboration -> outcome open

Februar

- first draft of thesis
- taking photos by my own and try to translate the information form the interviews into images (testing)
- work with the participations in a collaboration -> outcome open

März

- taking photos by my own and try to translate the information form the interviews into images
- editing photos
- work with the participations in a collaboration -> outcome more precisely

April

- analyze the outcome -> find a structure for it to present it
- continue reading and research
- redrafting time

Mai/ June

- preparing presentation
- final touches
- work on a graduation show

Who can help me and how

The Piet Zwart Institute (Lens Based), Teachers, Tutors and Students: Project Structure, Feedback and help by Technical Challenges

My photography Network for Project Structure and feedback: Manuella Braunmüller, Olav Unverzart, Fotobus-Society, Gina Bolle, Sandra Singh, Francesco Giordano, Bankleer, Anais Lopes and Wilfried Petzi

Laila Abrils talk and tutorial in November for getting feedback on my project

My close friends, family and my partner for reading my thesis and proposals and getting feedback, talks for motivation, discussion for reflection.

Selected Bibliography:

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